

TIPS ON COOKING FOR KIDS

1. **WHEN FOOD TASTES GOOD, IT WILL BE EATEN.** Don't underestimate your baby and child when it comes to their taste in food. Things that taste good to us -- like rich broths and in-season fruits and vegetables -- taste good to them too! When it comes to kids and food, taste is king!

2. **KIDS WILL EAT WHEN THEY'RE HUNGRY.** It can be easy to panic when your little one refuses to take a bite at mealtime. But children will eat differently from one meal to another and from one day to another, so the best thing for parents is to stay calm and expect the variance in appetite. Let the kiddos listen to their bodies! As my mother always says...If they skip a meal, they'll eat more at the next one.

3. **TINY TUMMIES = TINY PORTIONS.** Nutritionist, Nicole Meadow, MPN,RD, CSP, CLC, did the math on this one, and it's really kind of amazing. For a 1-year-old, at each meal they only need 1 tablespoon each of 3 different food groups. For example, a vegetable, grain, and protein. Only 3 tablespoons of table food. That's it! For each additional year older, add on an additional tablespoon of each food group. (Ex. a 2 year old should have 2 tablespoons each of 3 different food groups and so on.) And if they ask for more, by all means, serve it up!

4. **MAKE A CONNECTION.** I've found that the kids are a lot more excited to try a new food if they have a connection to its preparation, whether it's collecting eggs, picking herbs, stirring up a batter, or simply watching the cooking process. So get the kids involved when you can! And yes, it can be messy and a little chaotic, but when you see them light up, it is soooo worth it.